



**Bristol Brunel**  
Academy



**Cabot**  
Learning  
Federation

Exam  
Contingency  
Plan

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Date Adopted: (adopted by central board and amended)  
Implementation Date: January 2020



### History of most recent Policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
Date	E.g. Whole Document	Detail of change	Reason for change
January 2020	Whole document	Implementation of CLF wide template policy	
June 2021	Whole document	Updated dates and links to updated documentation	Updated JCQ guidance
October 2022	Whole Document	Updated dates. Checked that the links are the latest version of guidance. Appendix one.	Updated JCQ guidance.

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## 1 Purpose of the plan

- 1.1 This plan examines potential risks and issues that could cause disruption to the exams process at Bristol Brunel Academy. By outlining actions/procedures to be invoked in case of disruption it is intended to mitigate the impact these disruptions have on our exam process.
- 1.2 Alongside internal processes, this plan is informed by the *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland* which provides guidance in the publication *What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*.
- 1.3 This plan also confirms Bristol Brunel Academy is compliant with the JCQ regulation (section 5.3, *General Regulations for Approved Centres 2022-2023*) that the centre *has in place a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence.*

## 2 Possible causes of disruption to the exam process

### 2.1.1 Exams Officer extended absence at key points in the exam process (cycle)

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks required in the management and administration of the exam cycle not undertaken including:*

#### *Planning*

- ▶ *annual data collection exercise not undertaken to collate information on qualifications and awarding body specifications being delivered*
- ▶ *annual exams plan not produced identifying essential key tasks, key dates and deadlines*
- ▶ *sufficient invigilators not recruited*

#### *Entries*

- ▶ *awarding bodies not being informed of early/estimated entries which prompts release of early information required by teaching staff*
- ▶ *candidates not being entered with awarding bodies for external exams/assessment*
- ▶ *awarding body entry deadlines missed or late or other penalty fees being incurred*

#### *Pre-exams*

- ▶ *invigilators not trained or updated on changes to instructions for conducting exams*
- ▶ *exam timetabling, rooming allocation; and invigilation schedules not prepared*
- ▶ *candidates not briefed on exam timetables and awarding body information for candidates*
- ▶ *confidential exam/assessment materials and candidates' work not stored under required secure conditions*
- ▶ *internal assessment marks and samples of candidates' work not submitted to awarding bodies/external moderators*

#### *Exam time*

- ▶ *exams/assessments not taken under the conditions prescribed by awarding bodies*
- ▶ *required reports/requests not submitted to awarding bodies during exam/assessment periods, for example very late arrival, suspected malpractice, special consideration*
- ▶ *candidates' scripts not dispatched as required for marking to awarding bodies*

#### *Results and post-results*

- ▶ *access to examination results affecting the distribution of results to candidates*
- ▶ *the facilitation of the post-results services*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The Exams Officer (EO) meets regularly with the Assistant Principal (AP) for Curriculum and Outcomes and discusses the tasks that she/he is working on and approaching deadlines.
- ▶ See the Exam Calendar for the key jobs that need to be completed throughout the year.
- ▶ AP would liaise with the Programme Leads and Data Manager to ensure deadlines are met.
- ▶ The AP and Raising Standards Lead would work with another EO within the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) to ensure entries are completed on time.
- ▶ The AP would request assistance from another EO in the CLF regarding the download of results and request administrative help from the Operations Manager.

2.1.2 SENDCo extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks required in the management and administration of the access arrangements process within the exam cycle not undertaken including:*

*Planning*

- ▶ *candidates not tested/assessed to identify potential access arrangement requirements*
- ▶ *centre fails to recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010*
- ▶ *evidence of need and evidence to support normal way of working not collated*

*Pre-exams*

- ▶ *approval for access arrangements not applied for to the awarding body*
- ▶ *centre-delegated arrangements not put in place*
- ▶ *modified paper requirements not identified in a timely manner to enable ordering to meet external deadline*
- ▶ *staff (facilitators) providing support to access arrangement candidates not allocated and trained*

*Exam time*

- ▶ *access arrangement candidate support not arranged for exam rooms*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The EO is aware of where the Academy are in the Access Arrangements testing cycle and would be able to highlight any actions that need to be taken. The EO has the contact details for the Specialist Assessor and could arrange for a visit, with the assistance of the Teaching Assistant (TA) whom assumes responsibility for the testing of students and the collection of evidence for the normal way of working.
- ▶ With the assistance of the Specialist Assessor the EO could apply on e-AQA<sup>1</sup> online (or other online exam board services) for the Access Arrangements and ensure staff are aware of the requirements that students are entitled to.
- ▶ The Exams Officer applies for special requirements such as modified papers.

<sup>1</sup> e-AQA provides information for staff specific to their school or college through a secure website

### 2.1.3 Teaching staff extended absence at key points in the exam cycle

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Key tasks not undertaken including:*

*Early/estimated entry information not provided to the EO on time; resulting in pre-release information not being received*

*Final entry information not provided to the exams officer on time; resulting in candidates not being entered for exams/assessments or being entered late/late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies*

*Non-examination assessment tasks not set/issued/taken by candidates as scheduled*

*Candidates not being informed of centre assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body and therefore not being able to consider appealing internal assessment decisions and requesting a review of the centre's marking*

*Internal assessment marks and candidates' work not provided to meet awarding body submission deadlines*

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ We would act to mitigate the effects of the absent teacher by asking the Programme Lead or a departmental colleague to take responsibility for providing information about early/estimated entry; full exam entry; meeting entry deadlines. In the event of prolonged absence a regular supply teacher or a switch of roles within the department would allow the absent teacher's exam class(es) to receive appropriate preparation for the exam. After the exam [Special Consideration](#) would be applied for.

### 2.1.4 Invigilators - lack of appropriately trained invigilators or invigilator absence

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Failure to recruit and train sufficient invigilators to conduct exams*

*Invigilator shortage on peak exam days*

*Invigilator absence on the day of an exam*

#### Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The Centre's invigilation team is always kept at sufficient numbers to cover exam requirements. In the event of unavailability of invigilators: we would call in a replacement from the team, or the Exams Officer could step in; or ask staff within the Academy who have attended the appropriate training to assist.

### 2.1.5 Exam rooms - lack of appropriate rooms or main venues unavailable at short notice

#### Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Exams officer unable to identify sufficient/appropriate rooms during exams timetable planning*

*Insufficient rooms available on peak exam days*

*Main exam venues unavailable due to an unexpected incident at exam time*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ All rooming for exams is done well ahead of the exam season and communicated to staff. This contingency would only be required if a designated exam room was taken out of use due to an emergency. We would respond by: looking for alternative venues within the academy.

2.1.6 Failure of IT systems

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*MIS system failure at final entry deadline*

*MIS system failure during exams preparation*

*MIS system failure at results release time*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Exam entries are made in SIMS<sup>2</sup> over a period of days/weeks leading up to the final deadline and sent by A2C<sup>3</sup>, so an ICT<sup>4</sup> issue would mean entries would be delayed until the issue was fixed. IF there was a danger of the deadline being missed we would use the exam board's secure websites to make the entries direct, avoiding using the management information system. Results are also received using A2C and SIMS but again in the event of an ICT issue this task could be switched to the exam board's secure websites.

2.1.7 Emergency evacuation of the exam room (or centre lock down)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Whole centre evacuation (or lock down) during exam time due to serious incident resulting in exam candidates being unable to start, proceed with or complete their exams*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ A lock down or emergency evacuation would only occur if there was a serious incident, no routine practices will be scheduled during external exams. Therefore, the Emergency Evacuation policy should be followed. Invigilators and students will be briefed before the exam season of the protocol at BBA.

2.1.8 Disruption of teaching time – centre closed for an extended period

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Centre closed or candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or study supported time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning*

<sup>2</sup> School Information Management System

<sup>3</sup> A2C is an electronic data interchange piece of software

<sup>4</sup> Information Communication Technology

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ The school would prioritise the needs of the exam classes/year groups; for example, if only part of the school was usable, other classes/years would be sent home and the available areas used exclusively for exam preparation. If the whole school became unusable, alternative venues for teaching would be sought to allow examinations to take place. Special Consideration where appropriate would be applied for.

2.1.9 Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Candidates are unable to attend the examination centre to take examinations as normal*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ Investigate whether it's safe to open the school just to exam candidates. Alternative venues for exams would be sought if necessary, the exam board's would be informed and permission sought. Special Consideration would be applied for, for candidates sitting exams in a re-arranged venue.

2.1.10 **Centre unable to open as normal during the exams period** (including in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Centre unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ See above CENTRE ACTIONS: 8 and 9

2.1.11 Disruption in the distribution of examination papers

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Disruption to the distribution of examination papers to the centre in advance of examinations*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ If papers had not been received within 5 working days before a timetabled exam, the EO would contact the AB to ask why, AB telephone numbers are displayed on the Exam Officers noticeboard.

2.1.12 Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ If normal collection routines are interrupted we would: retain the script packets securely and try again the following day. In case of prolonged interruption, we would take script packages at the end of each day to a Post Office that accepts Parcel Force material. The Exams Officer and a member of SLT would fulfil this task. (Minimum of two staff).



2.1.13 Assessment evidence is not available to be marked

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Large scale damage to or destruction of completed examination scripts/assessment evidence before it can be marked*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ In cases of controlled assessment material: investigate how/why it happened – may be a staff training issue around safe storage of students' work. If possible/allowed, re-write/re-make or if stored digitally, re-print. Inform the exam board and send off any viable material with JCQ<sup>5</sup> lost or damaged coursework forms. Communicate to students and parents how the issue is being resolved.

**2.1.14 Centre unable to distribute results as normal** (including in the event of the centre being unavailable on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency)

Criteria for implementation of the plan

*Centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post-results services*

Centre actions to mitigate the impact of the disruption

- ▶ We would find an alternative venue, in the event of the school being out of use on results day. In cases of issues preventing the download of results within school, the download of results and printing of results slips could be done from the AB's secure website at another place.

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<sup>5</sup> Joint Council for Qualifications

### 3 Further guidance to inform procedures and implement contingency planning

#### 3.1.1 Ofqual

What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted

##### 1. Contingency planning

You should prepare for possible disruption to exams and other assessments as part of your emergency planning and make sure your staff are aware of these plans.

When drafting contingency plans, you should consider the following guidance...

##### 2. Disruption to assessments or exams

In the absence of any instruction from the relevant awarding organisation, you should make sure that any exam or timetabled assessment takes place if it is possible to hold it. This may mean relocating to alternative premises.

You should discuss alternative arrangements with your awarding organisation if:

- the exam or assessment cannot take place
- a student misses an exam or loses their assessment due to an emergency, or other event, outside of the student's control

##### 3. Steps you should take

###### 3.1 Exam planning

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

###### 3.2 In the event of disruption

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's ['Centre emergency evacuation procedure'](#).
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

###### 3.3 After the exam

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

#### **4. Steps the awarding organisation should take**

##### **4.1 Exam planning**

Review contingency plans well in advance of each exam or assessment series. Consider how, if the contingency plan is invoked, you will comply with the awarding organisation's requirements.

##### **4.2 In the event of disruption**

1. Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
2. Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether your centre is able to open.
3. Identify whether the exam or timetabled assessment can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation, ensuring the secure transportation of questions papers or assessment materials to the alternative venue.
4. Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exam or timetabled assessment when planned.
5. In the event of an evacuation during an examination please refer to JCQ's Centre emergency evacuation procedure.
6. Communicate with parents, carers and students any changes to the exam or assessment timetable or to the venue.
7. Communicate with any external assessors or relevant third parties regarding any changes to the exam or assessment timetable.

##### **4.3 After the exam**

1. Consider whether any students' ability to take the assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment has been materially affected and, if so, apply for special consideration.
2. Advise students, where appropriate, of the opportunities to take their exam or assessment at a later date.
3. Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
4. Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exam scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.

#### **5. If any students miss an exam or are disadvantaged by the disruption**

If some of the students have been adversely affected by the disruption, you should ask the awarding organisation about applying for special consideration.

Decisions about special consideration, when it is or is not appropriate, is for each awarding organisation to make. Their decisions might be different for different qualifications and for different subjects.

See also:

- [JCQ's guidance on special considerations](#)

#### **6. Wider communications**

The regulators, [Ofqual](#) in England, [Qualifications Wales](#) in Wales and [CCEA](#) in Northern Ireland, will share timely and accurate information, as required, with awarding organisations, government departments and other stakeholders.

The [Department for Education](#) in England, the [Department of Education](#) in Northern Ireland and the [Welsh Government](#) will inform the relevant government ministers as soon as it becomes apparent that there will be significant local or national disruption; and ensure that they are kept updated until the matter is resolved.

Awarding organisations will alert the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service](#) (UCAS) and the [Central Applications Office](#) (CAO) about any impact of the disruption on their deadlines and liaise regarding student progression to further and higher education.

Awarding organisations will alert relevant professional bodies or employer groups if the impact of disruption particularly affects them.

### **7. Widespread national disruption**

As education is devolved, in the event of any widespread sustained national disruption to examinations or assessments, national government departments will communicate with regulators, awarding organisations and centres prior to a public announcement. Regulators will provide advice to government departments on implications for exam timetables.

[Ofqual guidance extract taken directly from the *Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - What schools and colleges and other centres should do if exams or other assessments are seriously disrupted*, (updated 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>]

## 3.2 JCQ

15.1 The qualification regulators, JCQ and government departments responsible for education have prepared and agreed information for schools and colleges in the event of examinations being seriously disrupted. This jointly agreed information will ensure consistency of response in the event of major disruption to the examinations system affecting significant numbers of candidates.

Further information may be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland/what-schools-and-colleges-should-do-if-exams-or-other-assessments-are-seriously-disrupted>

15.2 In addition, awarding bodies have their own well-established contingency plans in place to respond to disruptions. It is important that exams officers who are facing disruption liaise directly with the relevant awarding body/bodies.

15.3 Centres should prepare plans for any disruption to examinations as part of their general emergency planning. It is important to ensure that relevant centre staff are familiar with the plan. Consideration should be given as to how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents and staff should disruption to examinations occur.

15.4 In the event that the head of centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled examinations, the relevant awarding body must be informed as soon as possible. Awarding bodies will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting examinations that may be available and the options for candidates who have not been able to take scheduled examinations.

15.5 The awarding bodies will designate 'contingency days' for examinations, summer 2023. This is consistent with the qualification regulators' document Exam system contingency plan: England, Wales and Northern Ireland: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exam-system-contingency-plan-england-wales-and-northern-ireland>

The designation of 'contingency days' within the common examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations. It is part of the awarding bodies' standard contingency planning for examinations. In the event of national disruption to a day of examinations in summer 2023, the awarding bodies will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact. As a last resort the affected examinations will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date

affected following the disruption, up to and including the last contingency day. Centres will be alerted if it is agreed to reschedule the examinations and the affected candidates will be expected to make themselves available in such circumstances. The decision regarding the rescheduling of examinations will always rest with the awarding body. The centre must conduct the examination on the scheduled date unless instructed to do otherwise by the awarding body. Where candidates choose not to be available for the rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration, they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. Centres must therefore ensure candidates and parents are aware of the contingency arrangements so that they may take them into account when making their plans for the summer. However, the awarding bodies will not insist upon candidates being available throughout the entire timetable period as a matter of course.

[JCQ guidance taken directly from JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2022-2023* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>, section 15, **Contingency planning**]

*General Regulations for Approved Centres* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>

Guidance on *Alternative Site* arrangements and *Transferred Candidate* arrangements

Accessed through secure login to the Centre Admin Portal (CAP) or through the JCQ training site <http://jqc.training.jcq.org.uk/CAP/Home/Training>

*Instructions for Conducting Examinations* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

*A guide to the special consideration process* <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>

### 3.3 GOV.UK

*Emergency planning and response: Severe weather; Exam disruption*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

*Teaching time lost due to severe weather conditions*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-time-lost-due-to-severe-weather-conditions>

*Dispatch of exam scripts guide: Ensuring the service runs smoothly; Contingency planning*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dispatch-of-exam-scripts-yellow-label-service>

*Statutory guidance on school closures* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

#### 3.3.1 Wales

*School closures – opening schools in extreme bad weather*

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/schoolclosuresfaq/?lang=en>

#### 3.3.2 Northern Ireland

*Exceptional closure days* <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/exceptional-closure-days>

*Checklist for Principals when considering Opening or Closure of School* <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/checklist-exceptional-closure-schools>

*School closures* <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/school-closures>

### **Appendix One – Staff List**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
Head of centre	<b>Jon Jones</b>
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Rebekah Curtis</b>
Exams officer	<b>Natasha Lippiatt</b>
SENDCo	<b>Louise Coles</b>
SLT member(s)	<b>Jon Jones, Jen Cusack, Rebekah Curtis, Jenna Godsall, Tara Paisey</b>